

EXPRESS OPINION

Big Spend is a big fraud

IT is wilfully dishonest for ANY political party to claim that it has the answer to the problem of unemployment.

There is not a single economist of stature in the Western world who does not believe that the number of jobless will remain high in the foreseeable future.

Yet at their Press conference yesterday, Messrs Foot and Healey were foolishly promising to create 2.5 million new jobs in five years by spending £11 billion.

This is a fraudulent prospectus.

Unemployment has risen remorselessly over the years. Under both parties. Regardless of increased public spending. Through periods of soaring inflation and falling inflation. In every country in the Western world. Even Down Under. Australia, with its vast wealth of natural resources, is suffering as much as we are.

How is Labour going to change this sombre global phenomenon? By magic?

Unemployment, alas, is not going to go away because the politicians tell it to go. Nor will it be spent out of existence.

French austerity

Look at France. That country has had two years of Socialism. Shorter hours, longer holidays. A massive budget deficit, approaching Mr Healey's £11 billion. Nationalisation. And what has been the result?

Riots in the streets. A ferocious clamp on foreign holidays. Successive devaluations of the franc. Heavier taxes. Austerity.

And unemployment? It has not altered. Unemployment remains at more than two million and would be much higher but for the fact that France has a large agricultural population. There is virtually no unemployment on the land. Anywhere.

With this example from across the Channel it is astounding that Labour should trot out the debased, discredited policy of the Big Spend.

Whose money are they going to spend? Yours.

Governments do not have any money. What they have they take from the taxpayer. And the more they take, the less will people work. So that the wealth of the country will diminish without the spending spree making any significant impact on the jobless total.

Cruel deception

For 30 years, until the mid-'seventies, we had full employment. Those displaced from old, declining industries were absorbed into new, expanding ones. But now the speed of technical change is outpacing our ability to re-employ everyone. Hence the world-wide rise in unemployment.

It is a cruel deception to pretend that there is a slick political answer. The Tories must resist the temptation to claim that their success in reducing inflation will automatically create more jobs. It will not.

Certainly a sound economy is the essential basis for expansion. Certainly they must continue to encourage the wealth-producers to produce wealth. But it is going to take more than anything yet conceived to bring unemployment tumbling down.

THE INEVITABLE VERDICT ON LABOUR'S ELECTION MANIFESTO

THE LONGEST SUICIDE NOTE IN HISTORY

IN THE unlikely event of Labour winning the election, the country should be in no doubt what it has let itself in for. . . .

- A massive programme of reaction against Thatcher's gradual revolution.
- An immense muscular effort to thrust us back into the world of Socialist planning, regulation and confiscation.
- The tearing up of our defence policies and the abandonment of NATO.
- A wrenching of ourselves out of the Common Market.

Labour's manifesto is a straightforward reprint of its March campaign document, "The New Hope for Britain." This marked the zenith of the Left-wing's triumph. It confirmed the previous compilation of Left-wing policies expressed in "Labour's Programme" last year.

"Our aim," says the Labour manifesto, quoting the earlier source, "is nothing less than to bring about 'a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families.'"

This is a fundamental and very likely irreversible programme: if carried out, Labour's manifesto would reduce us to the conditions of a banana republic, a European Cuba.

We would huddle behind controls and tariffs in a siege economy without any hope that the siege would ever be lifted.

The manifesto is 40 pages of double column text: A huge and confused document which one member of Labour's Shadow Cabinet has described as "the longest suicide note in history."

It would be suicide for Britain if Labour won and carried its manifesto out. Fortunately, as the Shadow Labour man meant, it is far more likely to mean suicide for Labour.

FANATICS

It is surely unthinkable that the British electorate will swallow this manifesto and keep it down; if it swallows it at all, it will promptly throw it up.

Mr Foot, Mr Shore, and Mr Healey yesterday explained that the entire programme had been costed at £11 billion. They promise reduced taxes and blithely say they can pay for it by borrowing. Unemployment will disappear and the pound will remain firm.

The manifesto says that

"to finance expansion by increasing taxation... would be wrong"; but it also says "the scale of borrowing will not be nearly as great as the increase in spending."

What sort of economic gibberish is being given to the public here?

Labour promises, without increasing taxation until full employment is reached, to increase: personal allowances, child benefit, invalid care allowance, old age pensions, Christmas bonuses, the death grant, earnings-related supplements, unemployment benefit for the longer-term unemployed, disability benefits, maternity grants and so on.

Labour proposes, without increasing taxation, to spend more on: Education, housing, construction, the inner cities, the environment, transport, Scotland, Northern Ireland, nursery schools, students, women, the ethnic minorities, the young, the old, tenants, and victims of crime.

Labour intends, without increasing taxation: To set up three new State banks; if necessary to nationalise at least one High Street bank;

to begin nationalising farmland; and to nationalise the new cable industry, part of the pharmaceutical industry, much of North Sea oil, and all of the National Nuclear Corporation.

Every part of our economic life is to be planned, regulated, controlled.

ATTACKS

Our industry is to be rebuilt with a five-year national plan, with a new Department of Economic and Industrial Planning, with unions and management and Government in a new tripartite National Planning Council, with development plans agreed with all leading companies, with regional development plans and, last but not least, with a National Economic Assessment arrived at with the TUC (but which excludes "old policies of Government-imposed wage restraint").

Private medicine and private education are to be attacked. The House of Lords is to be stripped of its legislative powers prior to being

abolished. And a "stronger, more representative" body will replace the Press Council.

The Labour manifesto promises to complete British withdrawal from the Common Market "well within the lifetime" of the next Parliament. The reason: continued membership will be "a serious obstacle" to implementing Socialist policies.

If the Common Market prevents such policies, then there is something to be said for it.

The manifesto's final dishonesty is shown in its passages on disarmament and defence.

All existing nuclear bases and weapons are to be removed from British soil and waters, and the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles must be prevented, not only here but in Western Europe.

FRAUD

Britain will press ahead with unilateral nuclear disarmament. "We will, after consultation, carry through in the lifetime of the next Parliament, our non-nuclear defence policy."

So much is at least clear. But the manifesto also says, as if saying it were sufficient, "The next Labour Government will maintain its support for NATO, as an instrument of détente no less than of defence."

This is gibberish, unless Labour is proposing a massive conventional rearmament policy for the West, which it is not.

It is impossible to disarm unilaterally and support NATO. It is a fraud to suggest otherwise.

Have the moderates in the Labour Party in consenting to a manifesto such as this, already conceded the election to Mrs Thatcher? Are they looking to tell the Left, after Labour's inevitable defeat: "There! You have had your way and you have just about destroyed the party?" It looks like it.

No other explanation makes sense.

The Tory Party could do worse than to send a copy of the Labour manifesto to every household in the land. The more thoroughly it is read, the more thoroughly will the Labour Party be rejected by the electorate.

● Labour's vision — See centre pages



New hope... or hellish prospect?

By GEORGE GALE

Turning steel town into wonderland

THE blighted steel town of Corby, Northants, is set to become... a place of fun.

The plan is to build a British version of Disneyland on a 1,000-acre site, owned by British Steel, that was once an iron-ore mine.

The creation of "Wonder

World" will cost over £200 million and create 3,000 jobs in an area where unemployment stands at 20 per cent.

The project has been dreamed up by a private concern called Group Five, started by two advertising men.

Recently, the idea was boosted by an allocation of

£119,000 by the Common Market. It will go towards the feasibility study which is already well underway.

The Department of Industry have also blessed the project with a grant.

There will be a glass-and-steel pavilion more than a quarter of a mile long. There

will be a planetarium, journeys through space, and old-fashioned steam trains.

Younger children can expect a "pumpkin" restaurant and Gulliver playground, plus Mother Goose's house and Dickory Dock's clock tower.

DAVID ROSS